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ABSTRACT

This summary highlights implementation strategies from the full report for restructuring middle grade education in Texas. The task force was guided by a central theme--a vision of Texas schools using each other as resources and the campus planning process as a vehicle for implementing research-based concepts and practices in the middle grades. Driven by innovation at the campus level rather than by top-down mandates, this restructuring effort will not succeed without strong commitment to staff development. Middle-grade educators are challenged daily with students exhibiting a range of intellectual, physical, psychological, and social development unmatched at any other grade level. Middle-grade education must foster individual growth by meeting the intellectual and developmental needs of children where they are, rather than adapting instructional practices and school organization from some other grade level. The nine developmentally appropriate goals and strategies embrace student learning; curriculum and programs; personnel training; school organization and management; finance; parent responsibility; community and business partnerships; research, development, and evaluation; and communications. State Board of Education policy statements about middle school philosophy, organizational structure, curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional growth and development, student support, and community are included. (MLH)

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ED 370 154

# REPORT OF THE TEXAS TASK FORCE ON MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT ON MIDDLE GRADE EDUCATION AND MIDDLE GRADE SCHOOLS

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
Austin, Texas
September 1991

EA 024 691

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# Spotlight on the Middle

## Report of the Texas Task Force On Middle School Education

*Executive Summary and State Board of Education Policy Statement on Middle Grade Education and Middle Grade Schools*

**Texas Education Agency**
**Austin, Texas**
**September 1991**

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## FOREWORD

In 1989 the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development published *Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century*. *Turning Points* presented the findings from an 18-month study of the current status of the education of 10- to 15- year-olds and eight recommendations for making education for this age group more developmentally appropriate. Carnegie Corporation did not want *Turning Points* to become just another task force report that was read and shelved. Through their Middle Grade School State Policy Initiative, Carnegie Corporation provided grants to 27 states to follow up their research by exploring ways to promote widespread implementation of the recommendations contained in *Turning Points*. Texas received a Middle Grade School State Policy Initiative grant to fund the work of a Task Force on Middle School Education.

The Task Force on Middle School Education consists of representatives of the State Board of Education, the Governor's Office, the Legislature, the Texas Department of Human Services, and the Texas Department of Health. Other members are middle school teachers, counselors, and principals, as well as district-level middle school program administrators and superintendents. The task force also includes representatives from professional organizations, community service groups, and institutions of higher education. The membership of the task force is intentionally diverse. The primary goal of this initiative is to effect policy change. Achieving this goal requires a combined effort from all levels of the education community.

*Spotlight on the Middle* presents the work of the Task Force on Middle School Education. The strategies contained in the report parallel very closely the goals and objectives found in *Quality, Equity, Accountability: Texas State Board of Education Long-Range Plan for Public Education, 1991-1995*. *Spotlight on the Middle* is organized by the nine goal areas of the *Long-Range Plan*.

This *Executive Summary* highlights the strategies from the full report for restructuring middle grade education in Texas.

A central theme has guided the work of the task force. This theme is a vision of Texas schools using one another as resources and the campus planning process as a vehicle for implementing research-based concepts and practices at the middle grades. A few middle schools in Texas have implemented most of the reforms advocated in *Spotlight on the Middle*. Some have implemented very few. Many Texas middle schools are somewhere in between. As middle schools begin to plan reforms, they are turning for assistance to middle schools that have already achieved measures of success. The task force seeks to augment this network.

A reform effort driven by innovation at the campus level rather than mandates imposed from above establishes new priorities for policymakers. Providing schools with the flexibility to innovate is consistent with the goals and objectives of the *Long-Range Plan* and with recent state legislation. *Spotlight on the Middle* is a policy tool that can be used to provide direction to leaders at all levels of the middle grade education reform movement.

This statewide restructuring effort will not succeed, however, without a commitment to staff development from all levels of the education community. The need for teacher and administrator training in the education of young adolescents is recognized throughout the report. Providing the training to enable teachers and administrators to spread middle school reform statewide will require a coordinated effort by schools, districts, Regional Education Service Centers, institutions of higher education, the State Board of Education, and the Texas Education Agency. ✦

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# INTRODUCTION

For middle grade students, change is a certainty. For the young adolescents enrolled in grades six, seven, or eight, the intensity of this change is matched only by its pervasiveness. These young people enter the sixth grade as children. They leave the eighth grade transformed, as teenagers facing a complex array of opportunities and responsibilities. The physical, psychological, and intellectual changes that occur during adolescence are second only to those that occur in young children from birth to age three. These changes are compounded by their context: they occur in a world of personal exploration, social pressures, and adult expectations.

Middle grade students are unique. Middle grade educators are challenged daily with a range of intellectual, physical, psychological and social development that is unmatched at any other grade level. Middle grade students are intensely curious about themselves and their world. They have a tremendous capacity to absorb new information and to question old. As they begin to experience their capacity to understand the world, they demand the privileges and treatment associated with adulthood. They are developing an awareness and concern for social issues and fairness at a time when they seem to be avoiding responsibility. Middle school children strongly desire privacy and independence from their families, yet adult nurturing and support is critical to future academic and social success.

Young adolescence is also marked by changes in educational practice and organization. As students enter the middle grades, they exchange a self-contained elementary classroom with one teacher and the same peer group for a six-period school day in which teachers and classmates change with each class. They are sorted into groups based on prior academic performance. They trade their neighborhood schools for much larger and more complex campuses that serve students from a number of parts of town.

## *INTRODUCTION*

The middle school years have been passed over by educational reform movements that have focused on early childhood and high school education. As educators, we have adapted too easily to the perspective that views adolescence as something that must be endured. As planners, we have too often seen the middle grades as possible solutions to district enrollment and facilities problems. Education at the middle grades must foster individual growth by meeting the intellectual and developmental needs of middle school children where they are, rather than adapting instructional practices and school organization from some other grade level. *Spotlight on the Middle* describes a developmentally appropriate middle grade education and presents strategies by which it can be achieved. ✦

## Goal 1: Student Learning

The traditional junior high school is organized, like the high school, by subject department with students grouped in classes based on prior achievement or standardized test scores. An instructional setting in which a heterogeneous group of students — reflecting the mix of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, maturity levels, and intellectual abilities of the campus at large — and an interdisciplinary team of teachers are brought together for the day better meets the needs of middle grade students. A common planning period for teachers on the interdisciplinary team, small group academic advisory periods for students, and flexible scheduling of the school day offer the framework necessary to provide expanded opportunities for learning.

**Strategies For the Texas Legislature:**

**1.1** Repeal restrictive statutes relating to services to special populations that directly or indirectly contribute to tracking students based on prior achievement.

**Strategies For the State Board of Education:**

**1.2** Amend rules to encourage school districts to develop heterogeneous learning environments to meet the needs of special student populations within the educational mainstream. Remove barriers to schoolwide implementation of programs that are successful for regular students as well as for targeted groups. Repeal rules that directly or indirectly contribute to tracking.

**1.3** Extend the repeal of time requirements for classes to all sections of the Texas Administrative Code.

**Strategies For Regional Education Service Centers:**

**1.4** Bring together representatives of schools and the Regional Education Service Centers to develop requirements for scheduling software that meets the flexibility demands of block and modified block scheduling, extended school day, extended school year, and year-round schools.

**Strategies For School Districts and Campuses:**

**1.5** Through the campus planning process, develop annual local objectives for fully implementing all of the goals of restructuring the instructional setting of middle schools to meet the needs of all students.

## GOAL 2: *CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS*

The teachers on an interdisciplinary team can plan their instruction around themes together so that the material taught in one subject is related to the material being taught in the other classes the student is taking. This subject integration, combined with instructional strategies that allow students to take a more active role in learning, helps encourage the development of higher order thinking skills in young adolescents.

**Strategies For the State Board of Education:**

**2.1** Restructure the middle grade curriculum to (1) provide a definition of a core of common knowledge that reflects a well-balanced curriculum for the middle grades based on the essential elements in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies; (2) heighten cultural literacy throughout the curriculum; (3) emphasize mastery instead of coverage; (4) provide greater emphasis on self-esteem, social responsibility, and growth; and (5) offer greater flexibility in preparing interdisciplinary thematic units and developing exploratory courses. Provide textbook publishers with the opportunity to submit interdisciplinary or thematic instructional materials for this curriculum.

**Strategies For the Texas Education Agency:**

**2.2** Design program guidelines and a curriculum framework for the middle grades to facilitate planning for thematic units and teaching mixed-ability classes. Prepare outlines for model lessons that include hands-on activities appropriate for advisory groups.

**Strategies For School Districts and Campuses:**

**2.3** Provide opportunities for all students to participate in activities that promote healthful physical and social development by encouraging intramural and youth service activities in middle schools.

**2.4** Emphasize participation, team building, and development of skills rather than competition in interscholastic sports.

## GOAL 3: *PERSONNEL*

Teacher preparation programs at Texas colleges and universities prepare, and the Texas Education Agency certifies, professionals for elementary and secondary schools. Administrators feel restricted by the mix of grade and subject specializations required in the typical middle school. They are further frustrated by the fact that neither the elementary nor the secondary professionals receive any academic training related specifically to young adolescents and instructional methods appropriate for this age group. The dual need for greater flexibility in the certification rules and increased inservice training for professionals is paramount.

### Strategies For the Texas Legislature:

**3.1** Increase the number of paid noninstructional staff development days and planning days for teachers and administrators.

**3.2** Provide statutory authority and funding for a statewide staff development program covering current needs and ongoing training. This training would include updating training models based on evaluation, research, emerging technology, and effective practices. Funds would be used for the development, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of training in areas designated by the State Board of Education.

### Strategies For the State Board of Education:

**3.3** With the Commission on Standards for the Teaching Profession, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, institutions of higher education, and middle school professionals, develop standards for middle school specialization, endorsement, or certification for teachers and administrators. Develop corresponding guidelines for alternative endorsement through staff development activities such as inservice training. Integrate changes into rules relating to teacher education, teacher certification, and assignment of personnel during the spring 1993 sunset review of these chapters of the Texas Administrative Code, to become effective in the 1994-95 school year.

### Strategies For Institutions of Higher Education:

**3.4** Identify existing courses and develop new courses to meet the preparation and professional development needs of middle school teachers and administrators. Specialized preparation should address the content areas of the curriculum, instructional strategies which emphasize active learning, cultural literacy, and the developmental characteristics of young adolescence. Collaborate with Regional Education Service Centers and school districts in identifying learning needs of middle school teachers and administrators.

### Strategies For Regional Education Service Centers:

**3.5** Explore opportunities for collaborative efforts with school districts and colleges of education within the region to develop training programs that coordinate academic course work and life-long learning needs of teachers and administrators. This collaboration can include sharing school and college faculties, co-development of curriculum, and cooperative research activities.

**3.6** Provide middle school staff development in such areas as academic teaming, flexible grouping strategies in heterogeneous classrooms, techniques for reteaching in heterogeneously grouped classrooms, developmentally appropriate instructional practices, identifying and addressing different learning styles, cultural diversity, and critical thinking for all students.

### Strategies For School Districts and Campuses:

**3.7** Provide staff development opportunities for teachers specific to middle grade education.

**3.8** Review leadership and management training needs and requirements annually.

**3.9** Request waivers for middle schools from rules regarding assignment criteria, permit requirements, and parent notification for teachers that have a valid Texas teaching certificate but are teaching in areas outside their areas of certification.

## GOAL 4: *ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT*

The Texas Legislature and State Board of Education have redefined the roles of, and relationships between, the different levels of the education policy community. The middle school organizational structures advocated in *Spotlight on the Middle*, such as interdisciplinary teaching teams, work within these new definitions to create a framework for enhanced responsibility for student progress at the building and classroom levels.

### Strategies For the State Board of Education:

**4.1** Encourage campus administrators to base campus improvement plans on a needs assessment that incorporates task force recommendations with effective schools correlates.

**4.2** Annually review all requests for waivers from middle schools to determine which rules are being identified as impeding student achievement and administrative efficiency. To encourage statewide implementation of effective programs and practices that incorporate recommendations from this report, consider changing rules in areas where waivers have been requested.

### Strategies For the Texas Education Agency:

**4.3** Identify a middle school coordinator to serve as a contact for middle schools, coordinate programs and services throughout the agency, work with interagency coordination efforts concerned with middle school issues, identify private and public funding sources for research and programs focusing on the middle grades, and maintain a data base of notable middle school programs and middle school electronic bulletin board. Since middle school concerns cut across all departments of the Texas Education Agency, locate the position with visibility at the deputy commissioner level in an area with broad responsibilities to middle schools.

### Strategies For Regional Education Service Centers:

**4.4** Develop expertise in the concepts related to restructuring middle schools to provide leadership to districts undertaking this process.

### Strategies For School Districts and Campuses:

**4.5** Integrate goals and objectives for creating a healthy campus environment as a component of the campus improvement plan. Include staff and students in the planning of this component. Encourage activities such as health promotion for staff and schoolwide youth service projects for students.

### Strategies For Teachers:

**4.6** Through the campus planning process and classroom preparation, develop objectives for fully implementing all of the goals for restructuring the instructional setting of middle schools to meet the needs of all students.

## GOAL 5: *FINANCE*

Some of the most important changes recommended by the Task Force on Middle School Education require that schools do things in different ways and that agencies providing services to young adolescents coordinate service delivery. Although costly programs are not added to what schools are doing, there are some increased costs associated with operating the restructured middle school. An initial investment in restructuring and a strong commitment to a redirection of existing funds are required.

**Strategies For the Texas Legislature:**

**5.1** Provide adequate funding for public education through the state equalized funding system.

**5.2** Increase funding for innovative programs. Give priority to start-up funding of programs that can continue without additional funding after the initial grant. Recognize the need for longer implementation periods, up to five years, for some programs. Continue funding of successful programs to defray costs to schools and districts of serving as demonstration sites.

**5.3** Restructure funding mechanisms to give all school districts a better opportunity to take advantage of the move toward more flexibility in local decisions. Revise the definitions of average daily attendance and eligible transportation routes for funding purposes to accommodate extended school day, extended school week, and extended school year programs.

**Strategies For the State Board of Education:**

**5.4** Define the supplemental expenditure requirements for state special program allotments as broadly as possible and encourage districts to reduce tracking by emphasizing expenditure for staff development programs to train all teachers in instructional strategies and programs that are effective for use with special populations in the regular classroom.

**Strategies For the Texas Education Agency:**

**5.5** Assist districts in planning schoolwide programs and programs that are integrated into the regular classroom for funding under Chapter 1 of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

**Strategies For School Districts and Campuses:**

**5.6** Assure adequate funding for middle schools in the district operating budget by allocating funds based on needs that are met through such activities as advisory periods and a second planning period for core teachers on an academic team.

## GOAL 6: *PARENT RESPONSIBILITY*

Parent involvement is recognized as a key to student success at all grade levels. Involvement of parents in the education of their children tends to decrease when students move from elementary to middle school. Although young adolescents are seeking independence from their parents, this is also a time when the need for adult guidance is most acute.

**Strategies For the Texas Education Agency:**

**6.1** Develop guidelines for strategies of effective parent involvement in the development of campus performance indicators.

**Strategies For Regional Education Service Centers:**

**6.2** Sponsor annual regional parent involvement conferences for parents and school district personnel that feature experts in the field and highlight exemplary parent involvement programs.

**Strategies For School Districts and Campuses:**

**6.3** Explore innovative ways of involving parents in the education of their children, such as through parent volunteer and education centers.

**6.4** Provide parent training in the skills needed to operate as a member of a campus management team.

## GOAL 7: *COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS*

The call for coordination of effort is heard throughout *Spotlight on the Middle*. The large number of state agencies involved in provision of services to young adolescents and their families in Texas, coupled with the financial constraints under which they are operating, demand greater efficiency through coordination of efforts. Schools must also develop relationships with community groups and businesses to meet the needs of students.

**Strategies For the Texas Legislature:**

**7.1** Pass legislation requiring all agencies providing services for young adolescents, including public education, to collaborate in developing a state plan for coordinating services. The plan should provide direction to the member agencies and address the need to (1) identify responsibility for services; (2) coordinate efforts at the state level, including establishing common eligibility criteria for services that integrate federal program eligibility criteria; and (3) coordinate management information systems to share information and develop the social services data bank into a true case management system. Require each member agency to adopt goals and objectives for implementation of the plan to coordinate services at the state and local levels.

### Strategies For State and Community Agencies:

**7.2** Coordinate services and resources to best respond to local community needs.

### Strategies For the Texas Education Agency and Regional Education Service Centers:

**7.3** Work with business, interagency, and community groups to develop and disseminate models of effective community involvement in each region. These models can include volunteer efforts, material support, and such activities as career and/or community awareness.

**7.4** Extend the Texas School Improvement Initiative program to provide business and community leaders and parents with knowledge and training related to effective schools research and the school accreditation process so that they can participate on school accreditation teams.

### Strategies For School Districts and Campuses:

**7.5** Include coordination of services to students as a component of the district dropout reduction plan. Explore the use of federal and/or state special program revenues to fund this function with a staff position that coordinates services, such as a district or campus at-risk coordinator.

**7.6** Explore opportunities for cooperative educational and enrichment programs, including expanded school day and expanded school year opportunities such as scouting and latchkey programs, with community service organizations and agencies, local businesses, and colleges of education. Collaborate with social service and health agencies and community organizations to develop guidelines that foster sharing of services and facilities by agencies in such areas as the use of school buildings, sharing transportation services, and providing school-based day care.

## GOAL 8: *RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION*

The implementation process integral to any reform movement involves an ongoing assessment of both students and schools with appropriate assessment criteria. Administrators need timely access to the results of these assessments and to model programs that can be tailored to their schools.

**Strategies For the State Board of Education:**

**8.1** Develop a broad range of campus performance indicators for middle schools based on task force recommendations.

**Strategies For Institutions of Higher Education:**

**8.2** Acknowledge the importance of practical as well as theoretical research and coordinate with the Texas Education Agency and schools in establishing a research agenda that meets the needs of practitioners. Develop research-based models for effective middle school programs to provide the basis for practical application of the results of academic research.

**Strategies For the Texas Education Agency:**

**8.3** Consolidate the program information from pilot studies, program evaluation, the middle school resource data base, promising programs data base, dropout information data base, and other sources to facilitate centralized service as a clearinghouse of information concerning model programs for young adolescents. Establish criteria for identifying and recognizing exemplary programs. As the Texas Education Agency electronic information system is upgraded, explore the feasibility of making program information available to schools and Regional Education Service Centers electronically.

**8.4** Develop an evaluation design for using Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS) and other data submitted by school districts to identify middle schools that have implemented programs recommended by the task force. Integrate a range of performance indicators with this structure to provide an analysis of the programs and their impact as measured by the indicators.

**8.5** Develop research-based models for effective middle school programs that can be tailored to fit local needs. Provide accompanying training and technical assistance to schools and Regional Education Service Centers.

**8.6** Explore alternatives to the current assessment programs, including those that integrate the use of new technology.

### Strategies For School Districts and Campuses:

**8.7** Explore the use of student portfolios and other alternative assessment methods to complement the state-mandated testing program.

## GOAL 9: *COMMUNICATIONS*

Communication is the key to implementing middle school reform in Texas. Networking among schools to share innovative programs, cooperation between Regional Education Service Centers and colleges of education in developing staff training programs, coordination of state services to youth, and business partnerships all revolve around the goal of communication.

### Strategies For the Texas Education Agency:

**9.1** Establish patterns of communication with school districts and campuses that provide dissemination of information to both superintendents' offices and campus principals.

### Strategies For Regional Education Service Centers:

**9.2** Enhance regional communications networks by building upon the training and consultative services being provided through the Regional Education Service Centers and incorporating the new communications technology.

### Strategies For School Districts and Campuses:

**9.3** Encourage active involvement with regional middle level leagues and the state middle school association. ✦

## State Board Of Education Policy Statement on Middle Grade Education and Middle Grade Schools

Early adolescence is a period of dramatic physical, emotional, psychological, social, and intellectual growth and development. The young adolescent, typically between the ages of 10 and 14, may have difficulty dealing with the variety and magnitude of changes that seem to be occurring so quickly. Social, cultural, and environmental influences and pressures may exacerbate the situation.

The family, peer group, community, faith institutions, and the school have historically served as supports for the young adolescent during this period of profound transformation and adjustment. Today, this traditional network of support has been weakened by changes in the society and the home.

### Philosophy

Effective middle grade schools serve two purposes—academic excellence and individual personal/social development. The focus is on the whole child with a balance between intellectual development and personal/social growth. Middle grade schools recognize, accept, and accommodate the unique developmental characteristics and needs of the early adolescent. They have educational programs that are intellectually rigorous and provide opportunities for exploration, self-definition, and personal development in the cognitive, affective, and physical domains.

Middle grade schools bridge the more self-contained, student-centered classrooms of the elementary schools and the more departmentalized, subject-centered classrooms of the high school.

## Organizational Structure

Effective middle grade schools are organized to promote academic excellence and personal/social growth. Teachers are organized into academic teams. Each team shares responsibility for meeting the academic and personal goals of a common group of students. The team has a regularly scheduled common planning time to meet and discuss curriculum, instructional strategies, and student progress. Middle grade schools are organized to promote in students and staff a sense of family, a feeling of belonging, and a sense of personal identification with the school and its mission. Middle grade schools work to reduce any feeling of anonymity among students.

Effective middle grade schools have schedules that are flexible, encourage interdisciplinary programs, and use time creatively to meet the needs of early adolescents. Heterogeneous classes are maintained as much as possible in middle grade schools. Students are grouped only for specific purposes and for brief periods of time.

## Curriculum

The effective middle grade school curriculum is comprehensive, purposeful, and reflective of the two purposes of middle grade education. It encompasses both the traditional academic disciplines and those subjects that help define and enrich the human experience. The curriculum is based on specific student outcomes and emphasizes both academic achievement and personal/social development. It provides a core of academic and personal/social knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary for early adolescents not only to succeed in high school and later in life but also to develop as individuals and as members of society. In addition, it provides opportunities for students to examine, explore, and discuss the changes associated with early adolescence.

Interdisciplinary connections and associations among the various disciplines and subjects exist and are explicit in the curriculum.

## Instruction

Professional staff in effective middle grade schools use instructional techniques and strategies that capitalize on the unique developmental characteristics and needs of early adolescents. Teachers vary instruction to accommodate different learning styles and to maintain student interest. They use such strategies as cooperative learning groups and peer tutoring opportunities to develop personal/social skills in addition to academic proficiency. Interdisciplinary approaches to core subject areas help students integrate their studies and promote higher-order thinking skills. Students are actively engaged in learning.

Teachers employ flexible student groupings based upon individual needs and interests to help students achieve specific program purposes. Students change groups frequently, depending upon individual needs and program outcomes.

## Assessment

Assessment in the effective middle grade school is comprehensive and purposeful. It focuses on the achievement of specified learning outcomes, both academic and personal/social. It measures knowledge and skills through a variety of techniques. The purpose of assessment is two-fold: to document the achievement of individual pupils and to evaluate the success of specific instructional programs.

## Professional Growth and Development

Professional and support staff in effective middle grade schools, supported by professional preparation programs and ongoing staff development, know and understand the unique characteristics and needs of early adolescents. They understand how the organizational structure and curriculum of middle grade schools differ from elementary and high school education. Professional staff know and are able to implement a variety of developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and techniques through instructional practices, classroom preparation, and campus planning processes. They are familiar with the philosophy and mission of the middle grade school and have the knowledge, training, and skills to make this philosophy and mission a reality.

## Student Support

Early adolescents need personal support from the school as well as from the community and the home. Advisory periods in effective middle grade schools assure that each and every student has a least one adult mentor, in addition to a guidance counselor, who knows that student well. No middle school student is anonymous.

Effective middle grade schools exhibit a culture of respect and caring that promotes a feeling of self-worth, self-confidence, and personal efficacy. Personnel in middle grade schools are positive role models for early adolescents.

Counseling and guidance services are provided to all students. Effective middle grade schools have a network of health and human service agencies organized and available to assist students with special needs.

## Community

Effective middle grade schools are inextricably linked to their local communities. They actively and continually solicit community and parental support and involvement. Middle grade schools seek out and use the resources of health and human services agencies, community organizations, and local businesses to support their educational purposes. They attempt to connect students with the local community through community service activities and educational projects.

## COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

**TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION 5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION**

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with specific requirements of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices:

(1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;

(2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a non-segregated basis;

(3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;

(4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;

(5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;

(6) nondiscriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and

(7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is found, the findings are reported to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.

**TITLE VII, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11246 and 11375; TITLE IX, 1973 EDUCATION AMENDMENTS; REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AS AMENDED; 1974 AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGE-HOUR LAW EXPANDING THE AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967; AND VIETNAM ERA VETERANS READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1972 AS AMENDED IN 1974.**

It is the policy of the Texas Education Agency to comply fully with the nondiscrimination provisions of all federal and state laws and regulations by assuring that no person shall be excluded from consideration for recruitment, selection, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action, or be denied any benefits or participation in any programs or activities which it operates on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age, or veteran status (except where age, sex, or handicap constitute a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to proper and efficient administration). The Texas Education Agency makes positive efforts to employ and advance in employment all protected groups.

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